

The Religious Society Of Friends (Quakers) In Britain

Quakers in Criminal Justice

Governing Document

Adopted on the 29th day of 2nd month 2020 by Minute 7 of the AGM of **Quakers in Criminal Justice** held at Woodbrooke Quaker Centre, Birmingham

Definitions

- i) The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain refers to the church in Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, in its entirety, including all its local meetings for worship and its constituent meetings for church affairs, as well as all their work. It is referred to below as the Religious Society.
- ii) Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) refers to the centrally held and managed policy, property, employment and work of the Religious Society. It is referred to below as Britain Yearly Meeting.
- iii) The charity constituted by this document is Quakers in Criminal Justice, a Recognised Quaker Body of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. It is referred to below as The Charity. The organisation was originally founded in 1983 as an informal group, and is hereby changed to a charity with essentially the same objects and rules.
- iv) The current edition of the Book of Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain is *Quaker faith & practice* (London, 2013) (referred to below as the Book of Christian Discipline).
- v) The term Friend refers to a member of the Religious Society.
- vi) The term Attender refers to a person who is not a member of the Religious Society but who regularly attends its meetings for worship.

1. Governing Document

Quakers in Criminal Justice and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with the provisions in this governing document. Further guidance about Quaker practice is contained in the Book of Christian Discipline .

2. Name

The name of the charitable body constituted by this document is Quakers in Criminal Justice.

3. Object

To advance the education of the public in general (and particularly within the Religious Society) on the subject of Criminal Justice.

4. Administration

Subject to the matters set out below, the income and property of the charity shall be administered in accordance with this governing document by the trustees constituted by Clause 13.

5. Application of the Income and Property

The income and property of the charity are used to further the charity's object by work such as:

- i) arranging conferences, seminars and lectures;
- ii) publication of a newsletter;
- iii) facilitating contact and exchange of experience between members of the charity;
- iv) anything else that may be legally done in furtherance of the charity's object.

6. Dissolution

If at an annual general meeting of the charity the members decide that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the charity, the trustees shall have the power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the charity. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to some other charitable institution having objects similar to that of the charity, and failing that for such other charitable purpose as Britain Yearly Meeting shall direct.

7. Amendments

- i) Amendments to this governing document shall be agreed by a general meeting of the charity and recorded by minute.

- ii) No amendment may be made that affects the object of the charity (Clause 3) or the benefits to trustees (Clause 16) without the prior written consent of the Charity Commission, nor may the charitable status of the charity be affected.

8. Membership

- i) Membership shall be open to Members and Attenders of the Religious Society, and to groups within the Religious Society (in particular Area Meetings and Local Meetings).
- ii) The Committee may also authorise membership by other individuals and groups in sympathy with Quaker ethos and values.
- iii) A membership subscription shall be payable, due on 1st January each year. The subscriptions for various types of membership shall be set by a General Meeting of the Charity.
- iv) The charity shall maintain an official register of members and shall appoint a Membership Secretary to have care of it. A list of members shall be made available to all individual members.

9. Termination of Membership

- i) Membership shall cease when a member so requests, or when an individual member dies, or when a group ceases to exist.
- ii) Membership shall also cease when a subscription remains unpaid twelve months after it is due.
- iii) Membership shall also cease when a general meeting of the charity decides that it is in the best interests of the charity that such membership should cease. The member may appeal for the decision to be reviewed.

10. Quaker Business Method

Quaker Business Method is the way in which the charity (in the same way as the Religious Society) conducts its business, through meetings for worship based on silence, carrying the expectation that divine guidance can be discerned if members are truly listening together and to each other. The unity that is sought depends on the willingness of all to seek the truth in each other's utterances. There is no voting in the meetings, because the Religious Society believes that this would emphasise the divisions between differing views and inhibit the process of seeking to know the right way forward, the divine will as expressed in the sense of the meeting.

The clerk of the meeting bears the final responsibility for preparing the business, conducting the meeting and drafting the minutes of the meeting. Minutes are drafted by the clerk during the course of the meeting, but the final decision about whether the minute represents the sense of the meeting is the responsibility of the meeting itself, not of the clerk.

11. General meetings

- i) The charity shall meet at such frequency, times and places as the charity itself shall direct.
- ii) General meetings are open to all members of the charity.
- iii) At least fourteen clear days' notice of a general meeting shall be given to all members by post or electronic means, stating the business to be considered.
- iv) A quorum at a general meeting shall be fifteen persons. A nominated representative of a group in membership shall be counted in the quorum.
- v) The business and activities of general meetings shall at all times be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the current edition of the Book of Christian Discipline.
- vi) The clerk may arrange for a special general meeting (other than an AGM) to be held if necessary.

12. Annual General Meeting

- i) An Annual General Meeting shall be held no later than fifteen months after the previous such meeting.
- ii) The AGM shall appoint a Committee including Trustees (see clause 13).
- iii) The AGM shall receive the Annual Report of the Trustees and the Statement of Accounts.
- iv) The AGM shall appoint an auditor or independent examiner (as appropriate) of the charity's accounts.

13. Appointments

- i) A Committee shall be appointed at the AGM from the individual members of the charity and shall include a body of trustees ordinarily containing not fewer than three or more than ten persons.
- ii) The Trustees shall include a clerk and assistant clerk (or two co-clerks) and a treasurer.
- iii) Appointments shall be made for an initial fixed term, generally not more than three years. An appointee may be reappointed for an additional term, but only in exceptional circumstances shall they remain continuously in post for more than nine years. As far as possible, terms shall be arranged so that there is continuity of experience within the body.
- iv) Nominations for service on the Committee shall be made by members of the charity, preferably to the clerk in advance of the meeting, but if necessary from the floor.
- v) The Committee may co-opt members to serve on the Committee. Such appointments shall be ratified at the next following AGM.

14. Eligibility, disqualification and removal of Trustees

A member who is appointed to act as a trustee may hold office until he or she

- i) notifies the clerk of a wish to be released from service as a trustee;
- ii) ceases to be a member of the charity;
- iii) is determined by the Committee to no longer be a fit or suitable person to carry out the duties of a trustee;
- iv) comes to the end of his or her term of service.

A trustee may appeal to a general meeting against a decision under the terms of (iii) above.

Members of the charity who are legally ineligible to act or who are disqualified from acting as trustees shall not be able so to act nor continue so to act.

Release of a trustee from office shall be recorded by minute of the charity.

15. Powers of Trustees

The Trustees have responsibility for the day-to-day running of the charity. The Trustees shall have the following powers, in exercise of which they shall at all times be guided by the Book of Christian Discipline:

- i) To raise funds from contributions; from legacies; from grants from outside sources; from investments and the use of assets; and from the sale of goods or services provided in furtherance of the charity's object;
- ii) To make investments in accordance with legal constraints and the ethical testimonies of the Religious Society;
- iii) To co-operate with other charities or to enter into partnerships;
- iv) To establish or support trusts or institutions formed for charitable purposes within the charity's object;
- v) To obtain and pay for goods and services;
- vi) To reimburse reasonable expenses, including those of the trustees, incurred when acting on behalf of the charity.
- vii) To open and operate bank accounts;
- viii) To effect insurance;
- ix) To establish committees or working groups for carrying out agreed programmes of work;
- x) To do any other lawful thing that is necessary or desirable for the achievement of the object of the charity.

16. Trustees not to be personally interested

- i) Subject to the provisions of sub-clause (ii) of this clause, no trustee shall acquire any interest in property belonging to the charity (otherwise than as a trustee) or receive remuneration or be interested (otherwise than as a trustee) in any contract entered into by the trustees.

- ii) Any trustee for the time being, who possesses specialist skills or knowledge, may charge and be paid reasonable fees for business done by her or him or her or his firm when instructed by the other trustees to act on behalf of the charity, provided that at no time shall a majority of the trustees benefit under this provision, and that a trustee shall withdraw from any meeting at which her or his own instruction or remuneration, or that of her or his firm, is under discussion.

17. Meetings and proceedings of the trustees

- i) Trustees shall conduct their meetings according to the Quaker business method as described in the Book of Christian Discipline.
- ii) The trustees shall hold at least two meetings each year. A special meeting of the trustees may be called at any time by the clerk or by any two trustees upon not less than seven days' notice being given to the other trustees of the matters to be discussed. This period of notice may be waived with the consent of all trustees.
- iii) If the clerk(s) are absent from any meeting, the trustees present shall choose one of their number to be clerk at that meeting before any business is transacted.
- iv) A quorum at a trustee meeting shall be three or one-third of the number of trustees, whichever is greater.
- v) A meeting held by electronic means shall be valid.
- vi) Minutes are to be made in the meeting and accepted and signed in accordance with Quaker business method as set out in the Book of Christian Discipline. The trustees shall keep minutes of the proceedings at meetings of the trustees and of any sub-committee.
- vii) The trustees may from time to time make and alter arrangements for the conduct of their business, the summoning and conduct of their meetings and the custody of documents. No rule may be made which is inconsistent with this governing document.
- viii) The trustees shall make a report to each Annual General Meeting.

18. Annual Report and Accounts

- i) The trustees shall ensure that an annual report and statement of accounts for the charity is prepared in compliance with current charities legislation, and is presented to the annual general meeting of the charity.
- ii) The trustees shall submit an appropriate annual return to the Charity Commission in compliance with current legislation.

19. Income and Expenditure

- i) The funds of the charity shall be safeguarded by depositing in a bank account. The bank account or accounts shall be held in the name of the charity and not in the name of any individual.
- ii) The funds belonging to the charity shall be applied only in furthering the object of the charity as defined in Clause 3, above.

Signed by the trustees of the charity at the date of adoption:

*R. M. Mason
Melanie Jenson
Josephine H Rado*